

# Wath Urban District Council.

At the meeting last week Dr. Burman read his annual Report as follows:—

To the Chairman and Gentlemen of the Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,—Herewith I beg to present to you my annual report upon your sanitary district for the year 1894, and also the statistical tables, marked A, B, and C.

The births of 166 male and 130 female children were registered in the year, making a total of 296. In 1893 we had 299, and in 1892 we had 308. As I estimate the population on July 1st at 7,690, this will give a birth-rate of 38·3 for the whole district. Our birth-rate, as usual, is a high one, the average for the West Riding being 31·3 in 1893, and 30·8 in 1892. They were distributed as follows:—

Wath: Males 81, females 70—151; including three illegitimate.

West Melton and Winterwell: Males 76, females 51—127; including 12 illegitimate.

Newhill: Males 9, females 9—18; including one illegitimate.

In 1893 we had 12 illegitimate children, of which seven were in Melton.

Thirty-seven houses began to be occupied for the first time in 1894, 24 in Wath and 13 in West Melton. Two of them are better class houses, fitted with water-closets; the others are good cottage houses, each one supplied with a separate closet with grated ashpits and locked doors to them. All are properly drained and supplied with good water. I would strongly recommend you in future only to sanction one house to each closet, as when two families use the same this is a frequent means of spreading infectious and contagious diseases.

We had in all 111 deaths during the year, at the satisfactorily low rate of 14·43 per 1,000, but from these should be deducted two deaths, one of an unknown man found drowned in the canal, and another of a child, a casual visitor who came ill into the district, and died a few days after. This will make the deaths 109, at the rate of 14·17 per 1,000.

Even without these deductions the rate is the lowest we have had since your Board was formed in 1882, the next nearest being 1892, when it was 14·56. Last year, owing mainly to measles and whooping-cough, it was the highest we have had 20·26. There were in January 7 deaths, in February 7, March 11, April 9, May 8, June 7, July 5, August 8, September 11, October 11, November 15, December 12, or in

1st quarter.....	25
2nd quarter .....	24
3rd quarter .....	24
4th quarter .....	38

Making a total of 111

Of these there were in—

Wath (population, 4,274) 60, at the rate of 14·04.

West Melton and Winterwell (population 3,104) 41, at the rate of 13·20 per 1000.

Newhill (population 312) 10, at the rate of 32 per 1,000.

In a very small population like that of Newhill not much dependence can be placed on the percentage, as it may give fallacious results, but both this year and the year before, the deaths were much above what they ought to be, and certainly some parts of Newhill are amongst our most insanitary places.

The various causes of death were—

Enteric fever, 1; cerebro spinal fever, 1; measles, 5 .....	7
Whooping cough .....	3
Total Zymotic ..	10
Bronchitis and pneumonia, 26; heart disease, 10 .....	36
Apoplexy, 3; epid. influenza, 1; phthisis, 5 .....	9
Pulmonary apoplexy, 1; mediastinal tumour, 2 .....	3
Diabetes, 1; chronic nephritis, 2; spinal curvature .....	4
Obstruction of bowels, 1; supp. parotitis, 1 .....	2
Cancer—uterus, 1; liver, 2; abdomen, 1	4
Gen. tuberculosis, 3; tuber. meningitis, 4 .....	7
Wasting disease of children, 10; congen. syphilis, 1 .....	11
Congen. debility, 12 (5 premature births)	12
Congen. malform. of palate, 1; infantile diarrhoea, 5 .....	6
Old age, 5; drowning, 2; killed in pit, 1	8

Making a total of 111

Of these 71 were males and 40 females.

The deaths from Zymotic diseases were 10 in number at the annual rate of 1·3 per 1,000, or if the five cases of infantile diarrhoea are included 1·9 per 1,000. Last year the numbers respectively were 2·8 and 4·2.

There were 27 notifications of infectious disease during the year, of which 10 died. In 1893 we had 35. They were as follows:—

Scarlatina, 6; diphtheria, 4; enteric fever, 14; erysipelas, 2; puerperal septicæmia, 1. We had, this year, no notification of any Zymotic disease in our lodging houses.

Scarlatina.—The six cases were all in West Melton, and were single cases. Two were in February, one in August, one in October, and two in December. No connecting link could be found between them, nor could any intervening cases be traced.

Enteric Fever.—Of the fourteen cases, the first was a single one in Winterwell, and no other case followed. The next eight cases occurred in and near Common-lane, Wath, in March and April, and were clearly traced to the contamination of the water of a well by sewage, which had entered into it from a blocked-up drain. The well was at once closed, and water laid on to the houses from the public supply. All these recovered. The other five cases were single cases, widely apart, one in September, and four in November. Two were in Wath, two in West Melton, and one in Newhill. Only one of the fourteen died, a man in Wath, who had been ill from other diseases for some time before. I visited all these cases, but could find no probable cause for them except for the eight in Common-lane, and one in Winterwell in November. This was a somewhat remarkable case. He worked at some coke-ovens with two other men, and they all drank of a stream which ran past a cottage in a neighbouring district, where 7 cases of enteric fever were (six of whom die) Two of the men lived at Concrete, in the Rotherham Rural District, and one lived in Winterwell. They all three began of enteric fever at the same time. One of them at Concrete died. The other two recovered. No other case followed.

Diphtheria.—Four cases were notified, two in May and two in November. Two were in the same house, and were notified on the same day.

Erysipelas.—Two were notified, one a severe case of phlegmonous erysipelas of the arm, and the other a milder one of the head and face. Both recovered.

Puerperal Septicæmia.—This occurred in November in a comparatively new house in good sanitary condition and the closet far from the house.

Measles.—In September I found two children going to school directly after an attack of measles, for which they had had no medical attendance. I immediately had handbills distributed in the locality, which was the West end of Wath and Winterwell, warning all as to the penalties for exposing a child with an infectious disease upon it. I think this had a good effect, but of course many were infected before it became known. About 30 cases came to my knowledge in October, and about 16 in November, but in December the disease seemed dying out. We had four deaths, two of them in Newhill, where we had a few cases, one in Wath and one in Melton.

Whooping-cough began to show itself in October, following measles, as it so often does, and at the end of the year seemed to be spreading. Three children died from it.

Epidemic Influenza.—A few cases still appeared early in the year, but no real cases of it came under my notice after that time.

Four inquests were held during the year, one upon a tramp who died suddenly, supposed from heart disease, two upon drowned persons, one a child, and another an unknown man found drowned in the canal. The fourth inquest was on a young man killed in Wath Main pit. Three other deaths were uncertified, one of an adult who died very suddenly, and two of children who had no medical attendance.

Particulars of the age at which persons died are given in table A. This year 42 children died under one year of age, which is at the rate of 142 per 1,000 births, and this is about our average. Last year, 1893, we had 59 at the high rate of 194, which was mainly owing to the prevalence of measles and whooping-cough. The average for the West Riding of Yorkshire for 1893 was 168 per 1,000 births. The causes of death of these infants were:—

Measles 2, whooping-cough 2, infantile diarrhoea 2, disease of lungs 10, premature birth 6, congenital debility 6, congen. malformation 1, congen. syphilis 1, general tuberculosis and wasting disease 9, making a total of 42.

The water supplied by the West Melton Water Company has been fairly good all the year, but

the Company should be asked to take some means of ensuring a more constant supply to the highest parts of the district, and notably to a part of Newhill where the people have been put to great straits two or three times during the year for the want of it. These parts are so little below the level of the Company's own reservoir that when it gets low the pressure is insufficient to supply them. From experiments which I have made I believe the water has no sensible action or lead.

We have four lodging-houses, two in Wath, one of which is a very good, clean, and roomy house; the other is much surrounded by buildings and not in a good situation. The two at Newhill are in a somewhat insanitary neighbourhood but are kept fairly clean, and I have never known them overcrowded.

In going round the District I was glad to find some improvement in our most uncleanly places, but they are not yet in a very satisfactory state. I noticed many ashpit doors defective. Some were open that ought to be locked, and several were torn off their hinges in West Melton and Newhill. These should be remedied, and if repeated I would certainly advise you to have proceedings taken against the offenders. Coal is plentiful in this neighbourhood, and careless and improvident persons would rather throw away cartloads of good cinders than take the trouble of riddling them through the grates.

The sewage works are now acting well. We find the alumino ferric process gives a better effluent with our sewage than the international process. It clarifies the sewage well, and when the effluent is kept in a warm place for some time, not much secondary decomposition takes place. The new sewer from the 26 houses in Midland-terrace, which was begun at the end of 1893 was finished early in this year, and now carries the sewage about a quarter-of-a-mile to the lower level in the sewage works. The South drain, which passes near the village of Wath, and which was for some years very foul and evil-smelling in dry, warm weather, now runs quite clear and inodorous, all the sewage being taken out of it; but lower down it still receives some trade effluents, which foul it to some extent.

As to the proposed hospital for infectious diseases a joint committee of the Wath Urban Sanitary District, and part of the Rotherham Rural Sanitary District, was formed some time ago. The land has been purchased, and application has been made to the Local Government Board for inspection and approval, but no date has yet been fixed. Much of the delay is, no doubt, owing to the change from the old Local Board to the new District Council. However, I hope that the approval of the Local Government Board will soon be obtained, and the project hastened on. I gave some particulars of the site in my last annual report.

I have great pleasure in testifying to the very efficient help in my duties which I have received from your able and energetic Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Arundel.

The year 1894 as a whole was a cold one, with but little sunshine during the summer. May was the coldest and most ungenial May we have had for many years, with many sharp frosts and a little snow. We had some mild, pleasant weather in May, November, and December. The rainfall was as follows:—

January ..	1·57 inches on 22 days.
February ..	2·46 " 16 "
March ..	·88 " 10 "
April ..	2·91 " 17 "
May ..	1·47 " 19 "
June ..	2·72 " 13 "
July ..	3·12 " 18 "
August ..	1·69 " 17 "
September ..	·66 " 7 "
October ..	4·14 " 21 "
November ..	1·01 " 11 "
December ..	1·28 " 12 "

Making a total fall of 23·91 inches, being about five per cent. below the average. It fell on 183 days, about four per cent. above the average. The driest months were March and September, the latter had only a quarter of the average. October had about 50 per cent. above the average fall. These extremes do not seem to have had any appreciable effect upon health, unless the marked prevalence of pneumonia in October was owing to the excessive rainfall.

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